



## ILLINOIS HOMELAND SECURITY UPDATE September 27, 2002

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GOVERNOR

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Homeland Security Director

- The Illinois Homeland Security Advisory System announced that the Threat Level Classification has been changed from Orange (High Risk of Terrorist Attacks) to Yellow (Significant Risk of Terrorist Attacks) to by the United States Office of Homeland Security on September 24, 2002, until further notice. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency is recommending that county and local units of government consider implementing protective actions from the "County and Municipal Government Guidelines for Implementation of the State of Illinois Homeland Security Advisory System". The Guidelines can be accessed at the Illinois Homeland Security website at [www.illinoishomelandsecurity.org](http://www.illinoishomelandsecurity.org) if your unit of government has not yet received a copy.
- The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), along with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and other state agencies which report to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), participated with federal agencies and local governments in meetings held in Northbrook on September 17-19 to prepare for the Top Officials (TopOff 2) exercise, scheduled for May 2003. TopOff 2, will test the intergovernmental coordinated response to a bioterrorism event in Illinois and a radiological event in the state of Washington.
- The Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), released an updated version of the post-event *Smallpox Response Plan and Guidelines* which contains an important addition to Illinois'

smallpox preparedness efforts – a comprehensive annex titled "Smallpox Vaccination Clinic Guide." The new section describes operational and logistical considerations associated with implementing a large-scale voluntary vaccination program in response to a confirmed smallpox outbreak.

The "Smallpox Vaccination Clinic Guide" is designed to facilitate and strengthen the ability of state and local officials to quickly and effectively implement large-scale vaccination clinics in response to a smallpox outbreak. Following a confirmed smallpox outbreak, rapid voluntary vaccination of a large population **may** be required to:

- Supplement priority surveillance and containment control strategies in areas with smallpox cases.
  - Reduce the "at-risk" population for additional intentional releases of a smallpox virus if the probability of such occurrences is considered significant.
  - Address heightened public or political concerns regarding access to voluntary vaccination.
- The CDC has issued a special Bioterrorism-Related Anthrax issue of the publication *Emerging Infectious Diseases*. The publication can be found online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/>.
- The American Red Cross has formalized its operation of a Disaster Information and Resource Center for use following major disaster operations including terrorism events. The Center has trained American Red Cross operators to provide callers with relief or recovery information, as well as links to national and community-based resources. Callers to the hotline can also find help with the following:
  - information for families seeking information on loved ones
  - answers to basic questions relating to the disaster
  - guidance regarding safety and evacuation

- supportive responses and links to emergency health care, mental and spiritual health services
- how to answer questions from children
- recovery information, such as how and where to receive Red Cross assistance
- referrals to other available assistance and information
- literature through the mail such as brochures for children, etc.
- statistics and general information about Red Cross activities
- how to help relief efforts through volunteer opportunities and financial or blood donations
- information on disaster preparedness and mitigation

The Center's telephone number is 888-GET INFO (888-438-4636) or TDD at 800-526-1417.

- A test of direct radio communications between the State Emergency Operations Center and the national American Red Cross Disaster Operations Center in Falls Church, Virginia, was conducted to facilitate emergency communications for shipment of supplies and blood products should telephone communication ever become disrupted following a terrorism incident.
- Plans are underway to begin hiring 10 VISTA Homeland Security Education Specialists to be placed at Red Cross chapters throughout Illinois. Interested persons should contact their local Red Cross chapter or call 312-729-6100.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health has conducted an initial drill of the Illinois Operations Headquarters and Notifications Office (IOHNO). The IOHNO serves as the strategic coordination and policy center for emergency public health and medical operations during an emergency of state disaster. The IOHNO will determine the need for appropriate resources, develop an emergency response plan for surveillance, communication, and pharmaceutical management, assign actions to be undertaken by department staff, resolve multi-jurisdictional coordination issues, and coordinate public information for the public health and

medical community. Funding for the development was made available through the Governor's terrorism supplemental received last fall.

- Members of the Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team (IMERT) and State Weapons of Mass Destruction (SWMD) Team will participate in several in-services throughout the state to ensure the coordination and collaboration of roles and responsibilities. The IMERT Team Coordinator has begun to make presentations to the SWMD teams to relay how the medical response system is established and to review the various equipment and supplies utilized by the medical team.
- The next Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team (IMERT) "boot camp" will be hosted on October 1, 2002, in Peoria. The training is a requirement for all IMERT team members before certification as a medical response team member. The training includes lectures on the IMERT system and how it interacts with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Emergency Medical Disaster Plan. There also are equipment stations to review some of the specialized items IMERT teams carry. Each team member is issued an official picture credential and IMERT uniform upon conclusion of the training.
- An in-service to the MO-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) will be conducted by the IMERT Team Coordinator. The in-service will provide the federal DMAT response team with information on Illinois' medical response system. Representatives from the MO-1 DMAT will make presentations to the IMERT Executive Council in the near future. The purpose of the meetings and in-services is to create a better working relationship between state and federal medical response teams.

- Staff from the Illinois Department of Public Health made a presentation at the annual meeting of the Illinois Pharmacists Association in St. Louis on September 20, 2002, entitled "Pharmacists and Bioterrorism: It's All Local" and described the role of pharmacists in local preparation of response to bioterrorism events.
- The Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety conducted the second of three scheduled distributions of potassium iodide (KI) tablets to members of the public living or working in the 10-mile emergency planning zone (EPZ) for the state's nuclear power stations September 21-22. The tablets were distributed from four locations associated with the Braidwood, Dresden, and LaSalle station EPZs. A total of 1,446 applicants obtained 8,348 doses of KI from dispensing stations in Channahon, Essex, Morris, and Brookfield. The KI distribution effort began on September 7-8 at Clinton, resulting in 5,792 doses being provided to 1,083 applicants. Distribution of KI in communities around the Byron and Quad Cities nuclear plants is scheduled for September 28 and 29.
- The Illinois Department of Agriculture received federal homeland security grants in the amount of \$180,000 to develop local county emergency animal disease response plans and to recruit and train private veterinarians to respond to animal disease emerge.